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effort to show the low plane on which the discussions of our gravest public questions have hitherto been conducted, and to point out a remedy. Mr. Adams finds it easy, by a swift review of our Presidential canvasses since 1860 to show the correctness of his criticism. He concludes that "taken as a whole, viewed in the gross and perspective, the retrospect leaves much to be desired,"—a summation evidently not open to the criticism often, perhaps not without a degree of justice, made on Mr. Adams of over-statement. Of the whole development of what we often hear called political thought and education in our Presidential canvasses, our author finally declares with more emphasis and more adequacy of characterization: "It has been at best a babel of the commonplace."

To his own query, "Wherein lies the remedy?" Mr. Adams's answer is a singular one; in substance, this: Assemble the American Historical Association, for example, and there in the thick of the canvass, let its members discuss the great present issues of Trusts, Imperialism, etc., and thus make appeal to the real intelligence of the country. It is hardly needful to specify the impassable hindrances to the application of the remedy, or its inefficacy, if otherwise practicable. But Mr. Adams gives us something far wiser and better than his remedy. He himself proceeds to discuss the so-called burning topics of the day—trusts and monopolies, currency, and imperialism. Passing by the discussion of all but the last, it may be said, we think, without exaggeration, that in 20 pages (pp. 316–335) Mr. Adams has presented the soundest, best-reasoned, and most impressive discussion we have yet had of the essential substance of what we now know as imperialism—its source, its motive, its end, its effect, its necessary final result. In these few pages he moves with the steady, firm step of a master, calling in for reproof and instruction the aptest lessons of history and the safest conclusions of philosophy applied to politics or political concerns. The volume would deserve warm and wide welcome if only for this one score of pages.

Mr. Adams as a writer is not to be praised without reserve. Certain literary and moral qualities which are fair topics for criticism, appear in all he writes. Our space would not permit us here to elucidate this remark, if we were disposed to do it. Nor does it temper the heartiness of welcome with which we receive the volume—a volume which in its whole effect adds to our stock of light and wisdom, and everywhere by its free vision and unhampered tone uplifts and cheers those who would know the truth and be guided by it.

D. H. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Life of John Ancrum Winslow, Rear Admiral United States Navy, Who Commanded the "Kearsarge" in her Action with the Confederate Cruiser "Alabama." By JOHN M. ELLICOTT. (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1902. Pp. x, 282.)

THE diligent and painstaking author of this book has done well with his subject. If in certain parts the book seems padded with matters of

humdrum routine common to the career of the average navy man, the author may be pardoned in his effort to give a minute chronicle of the officer's life afloat and ashore, although the bulk of it relates professionally to the uneventful days of peace.

Admiral Winslow came from old New England Puritan stock on his father's side and on his mother's side from North Carolina stock of Scotch strain. He was born in Wilmington, N. C., November 19, 1811, and spent his childhood days there. But his father, Edward Winslow, a Bostonian, sent the future admiral and his brother Edward, in due course of time, to Massachusetts to be educated. While at school, at Dedham, John fortunately attracted the attention of Daniel Webster, who obtained for the lad a midshipman's appointment in the navy. This was in 1827, John then being eighteen years of age. In 1827, after various cruising incident to naval life, he was promoted to a lieutenantcy. In that grade he saw much service afloat in the Mediterranean, in the Gulf of Mexico and in the Pacific, as well as brief tours of duty on shore. As an officer of the splendid but ill-fated steam-frigate "Missouri," he saw her suddenly destroyed by fire at Gibraltar, August 26, 1843, and was honored with the appointment as bearer of despatches to the Navy Department reporting that memorable catastrophe to the government. In the Mexican War he was associated at times on terms of intimacy and good fellowship with Lieutenant Raphael Semmes, who was to become his most notable antagonist in our Civil War on one of the most dramatic occasions of that conflict.

Now passing over his further service career until he reached the grade of commander in 1855, we may say that his criticisms in his home letters of Commodore Connor's operations in the Gulf during the war with Mexico might well have been omitted in his biography. He could not know the tenor of the Commodore's instructions and what he wrote in confidence to his wife in disparagement of Connor's actions, should have been regarded as confidential and not given to the public in cold print.

Soon after the outbreak of our Civil War, Winslow was ordered as assistant to flag-officer Foote who had been placed in command of the Union naval forces in the northern Mississippi and its tributaries. In such capacity, Winslow did able and effective work, not only as an organizer but as an energetic and vigilant commanding officer; but when Foote, owing to wounds received in battle, had to relinquish his command to flag-officer Davis, he asked to be relieved and sent to other duty. His request, however, was couched in such terms that both Davis and the Navy Department took offense and he was placed on furlough, a punishment in time of war almost worse than death. But Winslow, keeping his temper, wrote an explanatory letter so satisfying to Secretary Welles that he was soon restored, November 5, 1862, to his proper status.

A month later he received orders to take passage in the "Vanderbilt," from New York to Fayal to take command of the "Kearsarge." Now the opportunity had come to him which he was to improve to his own ineffaceable distinction and lasting glory to the country, but through for-

tuitous circumstances, over which he had no control, he had to wait at Fayal three months and a half before assuming his command. This was on April 8, 1863, and he was charged with the onerous duty of hunting down the "Alabama" and other Confederate cruisers and their capture or destruction. The "Alabama," in particular, was the special object of his quest. For nearly two years she had roamed the seas under the able command of Semmes, and had destroyed a large part of our merchant marine. Welcomed, encouraged and petted in English ports, she managed to evade our cruisers at all points and seemed to have a charmed exemption from every effort to meet her and bring her to battle. Of her call at Simon's Bay, near Capetown, August, 1863, Lieutenant Sinclair of the "Alabama" said in a letter to his mother: "If a Yankee man of war comes in they drive her off in twenty-four hours; and if they complain that they are in want of repairs, the English order a board of their own officers, and they always decide that the repairs are not necessary; but in our case they only say, 'We are glad to see you, old fellows, make yourselves at home, and anything you want let us know.'" That tells the whole story of English officialdom towards the Union cause during the war of which Craven, Wilkes, Pickering, Winslow and others of our captains had ample experience in British waters.

In the fourteen months of Winslow's arduous work of search and blockade, before he was able to bring the "Alabama" to bay, he was constantly harassed by the British authorities, and if he seemed to lose his head diplomatically on one or two occasions and bring upon himself an admonitory letter from Minister Adams, it was not to be wondered at. But all things have an end. On the 12th of June, 1864, Winslow got word that the "Alabama" had put into Cherbourg the day before and he proceeded thither with all despatch. Arriving off the breakwater on the 14th, he steamed in and out of the harbor, getting a good look at the "Alabama" in so doing, and then proceeded to blockade the port. Five days later, or on Sunday the 19th of June, the "Alabama" steamed gallantly out of the harbor to seek her eager antagonist and throw down the grim gauge of battle. The first shot was fired by the "Alabama." This was at 10:57 A. M. Sixty-five minutes later she hauled down her flag in distress and at 12:24 P. M. went to the bottom. To the Confederates had come defeat but not dishonor. Semmes as he was about to go out and engage the "Kearsarge" had written Confederate flag-officer Barron that the "most of combats were always uncertain," and taking the uncertain chance he lost. For a full account of this famous ship-duel, so dramatic in incident, so momentous in import, we must refer the reader to the author's stirring narration. Here Ellicott is at his best, telling the splendid story with technical skill and clearness of detail in a way altogether graphic and admirable.

At this day, it is difficult to conceive the thrill of delight that swept over the loyal North when the news of the "Alabama's" destruction reached the country. Winslow, his officers and men immediately became the heroes of the hour and after the "Kearsarge's" arrival home, they

were fêted without stint. Winslow himself was thanked by Congress and advanced by the President to the grade of commodore. In due season he became rear admiral, his last active service being in command of the Pacific squadron. Fortunate in the opportunity that came to him, his name goes down the stream of time as one of the nation's victory-achieving seamen, well deserving the plaudits of his countrymen.

GEO. E. BELKNAP.

Reconstruction and the Constitution, 1866-1876. By JOHN W. BURGESS, Ph.D., LL.D. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902. Pp. 342.)

LOOKING at the Reconstruction period from the point of view of the historian, it is certainly the most difficult in American history. Indeed, there is probably no more difficult subject to be found anywhere in modern history. To arrive at any fixed opinion of one's own concerning the main things that were done is hard enough. It is conceivable that a really intelligent student, possessed of all the important facts, and not without the power of sympathetic comprehension, might fail altogether in this initial part of his work. He might never achieve a view, a theory, a judgment, on which his own mind would rest with any degree of satisfaction, which he could with reasonable conscience and assurance commend to his readers.

Granting, however, that one has come to have one's own views, that one continues to see the matter in the same way, and can see it no other way, to do anything for one's reader is still uncommonly hard. One can of course let him sense the same confusions one has been struggling with. There is a certain content to be got by merely making sure that one has chosen intelligently and set down correctly the important events at Washington and in each of the southern states, no matter what the order or the form is. There is satisfaction, too, in stating boldly one's judgments of the men and the policies. When these things are done, however, nothing is done but the gathering of dry bones together. Perhaps it is enough to satisfy the demands of what Professor Burgess calls "sound political science." It enables one to gratify the liking all scholars have for working problems. It does not satisfy the ordinary reader. The writer, if he be at all artist, if he be completely an historian in his aspiration, can only acquiesce in his own work. He must fall back on his limitations or the impossibility of the larger task.

There is little to suggest that Professor Burgess had the larger task in mind. What he has attempted permits us to think that he did not fall back from it for any lack of courage. He has had the courage to commit himself unreservedly to a theory and a plan of Reconstruction. In the seven pages of his first chapter he announces his creed as boldly as if there never had been an issue over the matter among such men as Lincoln and Sumner and Stevens and Chase. He states his plan in his still briefer preface. Both theory and plan are intelligent. His courage